Message Text

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R 151314Z MAR 78 FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0227 INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD AMEMBASSY KABUL AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: PGOV, AF, IN

SUBJECT: MORE ON DAOUD'S VISIT TO INDIA

REF: (A) NEW DELHI 3705; (B) NEW DELHI 3779

- 1. ACCORDING TO MEA AND AFGHAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS, DAOUD VISITED INDIAN PRIMARILY TO ESTABLISH BETTER RAPPORT WITH PRIME MINISTER DESAI AND OTHER GOI OFFICIALS. WITH THIS MODEST GOAL IN MIND, BOTH SIDES REGARD THE VISIT AS A MODEST SUCCESS. AMONG THE SUBJECTS WHICH OUR RESPONDENTS HIGHLIGHTED:
- 2. INDO-AFGHAN TRADE: AFGHANISTAN BORROWED 50,000 TONS OF WHEAT FROM INDIA, NOT 100,000 TONS AS REPORTED IN REF A. HOWEVER, IF THE AFGHANS FIND THEY NEED MORE THAN THE 50,000 TONS COVERED IN THE AGREEMENT,, INDIA WOULD BE WILLING TO LEND AN ADDITIONAL 50,000 TONS. THE AFGHAN DCM TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT AFGHANISTAN'S HOPES FOR FURTHER OVERLAND TRADE WITH INDIA HAVE BEEN QUICKENED BY PAKISTAN'S AGREEING TO PROVIDE TRANSIT FACILITIES FOR THE BORROWED WHEAT; MEA JOINT SECRETARY I.P. SINGH TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR THAT DAOUD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLANNED TO GENTLY RAISE DURING HIS ISLAMABAD VISIT THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE TRANSIT PRIVILEGES. FOR THE PRESENT, HOWEVER, PAKISTANI RAIL CARS WILL CARRY THE WHEAT FROM STORAGE FACILITIES IN THE INDIAN PUNJAB TO PESHAWAR AT THE RATE OF 2,500-3000 TONS PER WEEK, THE MAXIMUM RATE THAT AFGHANISTAN CAN TRUCK IT FROM THE RAILHEAD. PAKISTAN TURNED DOWN THE AFGHAN'S REQUEST THAT THEIR OWN TRUCKS TRANSPORT THE WHEAT

FROM INDIA TO AFGHANISTAN, AND ORIGINALLY PROPOSED TO TRANSIT 8,000 TONS PER WEEK BY RAIL.

- 3. PAKISTAN: ACCORDING TO SINGH, DAOUD THOUGHT THAT THE RELEASE OF WALI KHAN HAD HELPED TO IMPROVE AFGHAN-PAKISTAN RELATIONS, BUT HE RECOGNIZED THAT IF HE GOT TOO CLOSE TO WALI HE WOULD DAMAGE WALI'S POLITICAL STANDING. DAOUD WAS IMPRESSED WITH GEN ZIA'S SINCERITY, BUT WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF PAKISTAN.
- 4. KABUL NON-ALIGNED MEETING: DAOUD WAS TROUBLED BY THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME COUNTRIES MIGHT DISRUPT THE UPCOMING KABUL NON-ALIGNED MEETING BY ATTACKING CUBA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE HORN OF AFRICA (REF B). ACCORDING TO THE AFGHAN DCM, TO DILUTE THE STRENGTH OF A POSSIBLE ANTI-CUBAN CAMPAIGN, DAOUD PLANS TO INVITE AS OBSERVERS TO THE COORDINATING BUREAU MEETING SEVERAL NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS WHOSE COUNTRIES ARE NOT ON THE BUREAU AND WHO PRESUMABLY, CAN BE COUNTED UPON TO PRESS FOR NON-ALIGNED UNITY.
- 5. IRAN: DAOUD TOLD THE INDIANS THAT THE SHAH OF IRAN HAD NOT APPROACHED HIM ON THE SUBJECT OF REGIONAL COOPERATION. THE GOI EXPLAINED, BUT DID NOT ADVOCATE THE SHAH'S IDEA, NOTING THAT IT INVOLVED NO COMMON MARKET.
- 6. MIDDLE EAST: DAOUD WAS PESSIMISTIC AT THE CHANCES FOR A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM AND DISILLUSIONED BY THE INABILITY OF THE ARABS TO SETTLE ON A COMMON APPROACH TO ISRAEL. HE DOES NOT INTEND TO INVOLVE HIMSELF THERE. GOHEEN

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